

## **HORROR LITERATURE SITE**

### **CHRIS WILLIS - BELLAONLINE'S HORROR LITERATURE EDITOR**

#### **INTERVIEW WITH HEIDI MARTINUZZI, ONE OF THE CREATORS OF THE NEW PRETTY/SCARY WEBSITE**

#### **GUEST AUTHOR - HEATHER COX**

Officially launched on July 30, Pretty/Scary is a new site that is for and about women in horror. I talked to one of the creators, Heidi Martinuzzi, to find out more.

*Tell me about Pretty/Scary? What is it and what are your plans for it?*

Well, it's a website that celebrates women in horror. That means all aspects of horror including literature, art, and music. We want to create a place where women feel comfortable showcasing their work, getting a review, or just finding out what's new in horror news. Most websites dedicated to horror news and reviews like Arrow in the Head Bloody Disgusting, Creature Corner, and Arrow in the Head are really cool and offer great interviews and awesome resources. However, I notice that most of the news is male-oriented. It's okay; it's not the fault of the journalists. There are more men than women involved in the horror world. Pretty/Scary would like to change that by encouraging women to get involved on more than just a fan level. Although fans rock and I hope Pretty/Scary attracts many of them, male and female. Also, I got sick of only seeing pictures of slutty women on websites dedicated to horror. Not that I have anything against slutty women, I am one. It's just that there is so much more going on in the world of horror that women are a part of, and we're going to report on that. There are authors, from Anne Rice to Poppy Z. Brite, and filmmakers like Melantha Blackthorne and Denice Duff who are really challenging the way people perceive women in horror. Many women also have a big part of already large aspects of the industry; Like Jen Vuckovic at Rue Morgue Magazine and Denise Gosset who runs the Shriekfest Horror Film Festival. I'd like to talk about women like that on Pretty/Scary.

*Who's involved in creating the site?*

The site was created by independent horror actress Amy Lynn Best, Jennifer Whildin, (Andy Hallet fan and genius webmaster) and myself (I am a horror journalist). Pretty/Scary is an attempt at a play on words. Women can be pretty, and scary. I guess we're pretty scary. . . .

*Who are your favorite women in horror literature?*

My fave women? The list could never end. Because I feel that I personally know so many of them, it's hard. But I'd have to say Cassandra Peterson (Elvira) has been an idol of mine since I was a kid. I had the honor of interviewing her for Pretty/Scary, in Prettiest Scariest Women, which is a section where we celebrate a different woman in horror every month. We discuss their contributions to the horror world. Also, some women that used to be ethereal to me, but now I've had a chance to meet and get to know them (but still idolize) are Brinke Stevens, Debbie Rochon, and Dee Wallace Stone. And who could forget Mary Shelley, the author of Frankenstein? Like I said, we love them all. Any woman who can get into a business basically run by men and make a name for herself is a hero of mine. . . .

*What makes Pretty/Scary different from other horror sites?*

Pretty/Scary is different from other horror websites in that it's not about women, it's for women. Meaning we've created a site we hope women will enjoy hanging out at and come back to time and time again. We don't just list a bunch of Scream Queens and show pictures of their tits: we actually talk to them about what makes them interesting and fun, and we try to really get to know them. Not that we're feminazis or anything; we just respect women. That doesn't mean we don't love that they have great tits (or sometimes get jealous because they have great tits) it just means that we talk about other things too. We're also the only website, as far as I know, that has a hot man in horror honored every month. We make them into pieces of meat and ogle them. Our first man of the month is Eli Roth, the hottie director of Cabin Fever. We did a small interview, but mostly we just want to see hot pictures of him. . . .

*Is there anything else you'd like to tell BellaOnline readers about Pretty/Scary?*

I'd like all the other women reading this, if they are horror fans, to know that Pretty/Scary is accepting submissions of dark music, literature and film made by women for review and promotion on our site. We are always open to talking to any woman about helping her promote her work in any way we can. . . .

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## **FROM STACI WILSON YOUR GUIDE TO HORROR & SUSPENSE MOVIES**

### **HORROR HOTTIE HEIDI MARTINUZZI'S PRETTY/SCARY DOUBLES UP WITH L.A. SHRIEFEST**

Shriekfest, the Los Angeles International Horror/Thriller/Sci-Fi/Fantasy Film Festival & Screenplay Competition, and Pretty/Scary, the organization and website that encourages female creativity in the horror genre, have joined forces for the 7th annual event happening September 28-October 7, 2007 in Hollywood, California.

Pretty/Scary will sponsor an award for the film that best symbolizes innovative, interesting, provocative, and groundbreaking representations of women in the horror, sci-fi, or fantasy genres. Eligible films will either be outstanding examples of genre filmmaking and have been written or directed by a woman, or have a radically amazing central female character. Since the award will be given to the film and not the filmmaker, films by men and women both are eligible for the Pretty/Scary award, which will be given out at the closing night awards ceremony.

Tuesday April 3, 2007

## **JOURNALIST/ACTRESS INTERVIEW:**

### **THAT'S MS. PRETTY SCARY TO YOU:**

#### **TALKING WITH HORROR JOURNALIST AND WEB-MISTRESS HEIDI MARTINUZZI**

**BY OWEN KEEHNEN**

Heidi Martinuzzi is someone every horror fan should know. Her website (along with co-founders Amy Lynn Best and Jennifer Whildin) is [www.pretty-scary.net](http://www.pretty-scary.net) and it is breaking ground in the genre as a site to celebrate and promote women in the horror genre and it's definitely worth putting on your "favorite places" list. Her writing (reviews, columns and such) grace such sites and periodicals as Microcinemascene, Film Threat, Cult Cuts, and Bloody Disgusting, Film Addiction Magazine, and Rogue Cinema. She has also recently organized a 2006 Scream Queen Calendar, which goes on sale in August (Debbie Rochon is on the cover and models include additional racksandrazors favorites such as Brinke Stevens, Amy Lynn Best, Lilith Stabs, Melantha Backthorne, Suzi Lorraine, and Chainsaw Sally). Heidi herself is a former Tromette of the Month, and recently made her film debut as Tracy, a blood splattered machete victim. When I talked with her I also discovered Heidi had a number of other projects pending, yet she was still cool enough to take the time to answer a few questions.

*Owen: Your Pretty/Scary site ([www.pretty-scary.net](http://www.pretty-scary.net)) is great. How did that come about?*

Heidi: Well, Amy Lynn Best ([www.amylynnbest.com](http://www.amylynnbest.com)) and Jennifer Whildin ([www.sassydevil.com](http://www.sassydevil.com)) and I were sick of horror websites that only featured hot women, and then, only actresses. The forums on these sites were always filled with really stupid men who couldn't put two sentences together, and always had the same old fights "Alien Vs. Predator Sucked! No, It Ruled!" So we got together and made a website that promoted women who wouldn't ordinarily get interviewed, i.e. artists, directors, writers, etc., and also a place where women could get reviews of their work from like-minded females. It's a whole sisterhood thing. I know that sounds lame, but women really do get intimidated by how mean and rude men are. In July 2004 we launched Pretty/Scary, and it's been a year now, and we're going strong. We've gotten interviews from some really big named Hollywood actresses, and some unknown indie directors and writers, and a bunch of new filmmakers just starting out. I have learned so much about women in horror, and I think everyone who visits the site does, too.

*Owen: Do you have a pretty clear idea where you want to take the site?*

Heidi: We've decided to hold the first annual Pretty/Scary awards this year at the Genghis Con convention in Pennsylvania. [www.ghengisconpa.com](http://www.ghengisconpa.com) We'll be honoring a film written, directed, or produced by a woman, and have the filmmakers come down to receive an award. It's something we've wanted to do for a while. I'd also like to give an award to a woman who has worked hard to overcome stereotypes in the industry. There has been some talk of a magazine, and a TV show, but no plans yet. I definitely plan on writing a book about female horror film directors, which I have started, and I would love to make a Pretty/Scary compilation of horror film by women. We'll see!

*Owen: Do you find it ironic that the horror genre, which is often seen as exploitative of women, actually offers greater opportunities for women when it comes to directing and scripting? Or do you disagree.*

Heidi: I totally disagree. Women rarely get directing gigs unless they're making an indie project on their own. Out of about 1000 horror films I love, I can think of only 4 or 5 mainstream horror directors who are female: Kathryn Bigelow, Mary Lambert, Antonia Bird (if you can count Ravenous as a horror film), Mary Harron (American Psycho is her only horror film), and Ana Clavell, who just started directing, are the only ones off the top of my head. There are a few others... The new Aeon Flux film, though not horror, is directed by a woman.

Producing though, offers tons of positions for women. Many horror films, including Scream, Cabin Fever, and the entire Serial Killers series (Dahmer, Gacy, Ed Gein) are all produced by women. So were Terminator 2 and 3. Since producing is very much about "taking care of everything" it's a role that is not only socially acceptable to women, but that comes naturally easy to women. Lets face it; a producer is like a big mommy who makes sure everything runs smoothly. Definitely something non-threatening for women to attempt, especially in the eyes of others. Writing is a more passive aspect of filmmaking too, though the most important. A few women in the industry really have me applauding; Jace Anderson for instance, who wrote Mortuary and Toolbox Murders for Tobe Hooper, and lets not forget Crocodile II: Deathroll. Brinke Stevens has turned from just actress to actress/writer on several projects, including Dr. Horror's Erotic House of Idiots, and Wild Spirit. Most women, however, just write, direct, and star in their own projects when they want to break through the barrier, something almost impossible to accomplish in Hollywood. Women like Stephanie Beaton, Stephanie Aldridge, Amy Lynn Best, Denice Duff, and Darla Enlow have all taken matters into their own hands.

*Owen: Did you ever expect to be thrust into the position of a noted horror expert, reviewer, and essayist?*

Heidi: No. I thought I was going to be a physical anthropologist, which is what I have a degree in. You know, forensics and bones, and all that. Then I was going to be a cop, and then I was going to be a mortgage broker... Horror films were just a hobby. Who knew you could make a hobby into a job! Except

for all those sports people. I guess they qualify. It was actually a dream to become a horror reviewer, rather than an expectation. I feel very lucky to be so deeply entrenched in something I love so much.

*Owen: So when you were a "wee Heidi" was there some event or memory that you look back on today and say, "Oh yeah, that kid was destined for a career on the horror forefront"?*

Heidi: Well, when I was 3 and I loved watching horror films, (I remember Nightmare on Elm Street Part 2 was the first horror film I saw in a theater) and my favorite show was "Elvira's Movie Macabre", which I never missed, I should have had an inkling. Actually, the truth is, my parents are foreign and the idea of censorship is completely ridiculous to them. My mother grew up watching people burn to death in the streets of World War II Frankfurt. I suppose she thought that if she turned out okay, my watching "Piranha" was no big deal. I tend to agree with her. People should let kids watch horror films. It's just a fucking movie.

*Owen: As someone who interacts with people on the creative as well as the appreciative side of the horror scene what do you think are some of the primary characteristics that distinguish horror fans from most other folk?*

Heidi: Horror fans are lucky because they get to interact with their heroes. You can go to a convention and meet Tom Savini and Bruce Campbell... You try finding Julia Roberts at a Romantic Comedy Festival and see if she even gives a shit that people want to talk to her. Because horror is like a big family, there's a family element. And because of indie films, anyone can become a horror icon if they really really want it. Not like any other genre of film, where only the lucky few in Hollywood get to do that.

*Owen: What other projects do you have pending?*

Heidi: Well, like I said, the book about female horror film directors, a 2006 Women in Independent Horror calendar from Pretty/Scary, the awards ceremony at Genghis Con, and perhaps a compilation DVD of horror films by women. Other pending projects include: pay my rent, vacuum, go to AA meetings, quit smoking, find a new therapist, finish that patchwork quilt I started in 7th grade, and add to my Glass Unicorn Collection.

*Owen: Were there any perks to being named a Tromette of the Month?*

Heidi: Other than being naked on the Internet? Not really. It's just an honor to be recognized as a hot sleazy woman by the master of crappy films himself, Uncle Lloyd. No prize money, no role in a film, no money or car. It's not that great, actually, now that I think about it.

*Owen: So as a "Goddess of Gore and More" what are your favorite horror flicks?*

Heidi: I adore Dead Alive AKA Braindead by Peter Jackson. I used to love Army of Darkness, but I have watched it too many times now so I can't enjoy it on the same level anymore. I like horror with a little comedy in it. Except Halloween. Halloween always has, and always will, scare the living shit out of me. I watch a lot of indie films, and I'll Bury You Tomorrow by Alan Rowe Kelley ([www.illburyoutomorrow.com](http://www.illburyoutomorrow.com)) is just genius. So is Yimeng Jin's 17th Man ([www.the17thman.com](http://www.the17thman.com)).

*Owen: What's something that makes you scream in real life?*

Heidi: My ex. Ha! No, how about, good sex? Okay okay.... I get scared of dark alleys, being mugged, rape, spiders, snakes (especially snakes), alcoholism, failure, old age, poverty, and insignificance. Those are the things that make me scream and toss and turn at night. Those are the really scary things in life. I'll take Freddy Krueger over all of them, any day.

## **DEATH BECOMES HER BY AMANDA CARVER**

Posted October 31, 2006

I was honored this week to have had the opportunity to chat with horror icon, Heidi Martinuzzi. Born and raised in Los Angeles, Heidi has taken the horror world by storm.

A former writer for Bloody-Disgusting.com and Film Threat Magazine, Heidi is also a horror film expert for E! on their True Hollywood Stories. Heidi recently graced the screen on E!'s Texas Chainsaw Massacre Special celebrating the opening of Texas Chainsaw Massacre: The Beginning.

Horror fanatic Heidi pays homage to Elvira, Mistress of the Dark, and thanks her for wetting her appetite for terror at a very early age.

Heidi teamed up with Amy Lynn Best and Jennifer Whildin in July 2004 and opened the coffin doors of Pretty-Scary.net, a website devoted to the women of horror. Heidi says Pretty-Scary is a website designed for women, by women, and is a safe place for the women of horror to meet, talk, and promote their products. She tells me that woman are pretty...pretty scary. I couldn't agree more.

Pretty-Scary.net is a fright girls haven and plays host to sections on film, literature, music, reviews, first rate interviews, and just about anything else under the full, blood moon. Of course, there is a chance you'll run across a glittering, pink unicorn...just be on your toes. The unicorn may look pretty, but you can bet it's armed to the teeth and has never had a rabies shot.

Heidi also joined up with Amy Lynn Best to start WIH, the Women in Horror Organization, this year. Members can be added to and have access to a database of female horror professionals. The database was designed to help female professionals in the horror industry network and collaborate their efforts.

Heidi is currently busy at work on a novel about female horror film directors and has written, produced, and co-directed her own horror short, Wretched, which is in post-production.

Heidi has also graced the silver screen in several horror films including Evil Ever After with Scream Queen, Brink Stevens and Joe Bob Briggs. She makes another TV appearance tonight, just in time for Halloween, on G4's "Attack of the Show", where she will be in a hot debate over the Best Zombie Film Ever.

You can drop Heidi and the girls a line at [www.pretty-scary.net](http://www.pretty-scary.net) or visit her website [www.thehorrorpost.com](http://www.thehorrorpost.com)

You may link to this page at : <http://www.thesop.org/article.php?id=2715>

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## MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

### AN INTERVIEW WITH INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER LESLIE DELANO BY AMANDA BY NIGHT

Leslie Delano is one of the unsung heroes in the world of indie films. A female director with a conscience, she's set out to change the popular perceptions of beauty as well as the lingering stereotypes women have had to endure since the inception of the genre movie. A self-proclaimed horror addict, Leslie's response to these off-putting characterizations was to put a feminist spin on the much recycled slasher subgenre in *Deadly Lessons*, a feature length movie she produced, wrote and directed...

"I'm working on changing the fashion industry's perception of size by using plus models in edgy spreads because working with size 2, 12 year-old models is its own version of horror." - Leslie Delano

But before Leslie found herself knee deep in T & A, blood and guts, and all things in between, she began her working life as a successful model, which was not her original intention. "I did it because it was stupid and easy. Some people told me I might be able to go places if only I would behave, but I just wasn't interested."

While enjoying the glamorous world of modeling Leslie was asked to be involved in the king of gross-out-mind-bending B movies, *Class of Nuke 'em High*. "I was friends with this girl who knew I could do makeup and she asked me if I could help out on *Class*... She warned me that these were dreadful people, but everyone was pretty cool." Leslie even had the distinct pleasure of (secretly) being paid a little extra by the notoriously cheap Lloyd Kaufman. But it was meeting the director of *Class*... Richard W. Haines that had her diving head first into the world of underground filmmaking.

Her first collaboration with Richard was the time-warp-action-horror-comedy-alien-cop-thriller *Alien Space Avenger*, which Leslie admits was not a difficult script to write. "As a joke, I wrote a treatment for a movie. (Richard) is not big into dialogue. Just surround him with naked girls, and he's alright!" *Space Avenger* (the alternate title) not only had the distinct honor of starring Billy Ray McQuade, who also appeared in *Mother's Day* and *L.A. Confidential* (!) but Leslie and Richard trekked all the way to China to have their movie printed in the last Technicolor studio in the world. In fact, clips from *Space Avenger* were featured on *Entertainment Tonight* in a segment hosted by Leonard Maltin!

Encouraged by the modest success of *Space Avenger*, Leslie and Richard teamed up again for *Head Games*, a Troma-esque thriller about violent killers being experimented on and released back into society. Leslie found she had more to do on this project than just put paper to pen. "Actors were coming to me in tears because they hadn't had one rehearsal. So I helped Richard direct them. The cast was really cool. J.J. North was even in it. She was sweet, but had some trouble with her three lines."

Leslie remains good-natured about her experiences with Richard and she looks back on those days as a "progression of control". She also began to develop a knack for the camera and shot some outtake footage for a documentary she still plans on releasing called *How Low Can You Go* as well as completing another documentary about her friend who was a male prostitute.

It didn't take long after *Head Games* for Leslie to pull some resources together and helm her first feature... all while still in film school. Leslie decided to make a horror movie that was her answer to a genre that didn't cater to women. On the surface, *Deadly Lessons* looks just like another psycho-bitch-from-hell flick, but upon a closer look, the viewer will find a horror movie about the woes of acceptance, the sadness of being a Plain Jane surrounded by Bodacious Betties and a world where the women are savvy enough to live while the men die brutally. Another twist to the genre, *Deadly Lessons* also showcases full frontal male nudity. "I got tired of seeing tits and dildos in every scene... One of the stars, Jason Moore, agreed that women were always getting exploited in these horror films so he was like 'exploit me!' I wanted to tongue in cheek switch things around. It's always women with these huge breasts in their underwear getting sliced-n-diced and the men were supposed to be so smart. But they get killed instead."

Originally titled *Dawn*, *Deadly Lessons* sported a strong cast of Chicago locals and a crew featuring folks like Ron Forsythe, who later went on to become director of photography on *Invansxtc* directed by Bernard Rose (*Candyman*). She also financed her project with a bank loan! "I put together a really good package and presented it to this bank which is not in Hollywood. They gave me the money and a year to pay it back. So I had \$150,000 to make an entire film, but I had to set aside some of the budget to make payments to the bank."

But Leslie has no complaints about shooting her low-budget horror film. "I couldn't have had a better experience. I must have had little *Dawn* angels around me. And even though I would have had better success had *Scream* come out just a little sooner, I've played all over the world. The only place I haven't been is American cable, but the thing that really meant the most to me about this film was that I got to finish it before my mother died. She was very proud of it. I'd like to mention that."

Just as Leslie was searching for her next project, a series of dark dreams started haunting her in her sleep. These visions involved being tied down in

a prison cell and slapped as men in orange coveralls are doing drugs around her. "After that dream, I woke up and turned on my TV. Robert Downey Jr. was being sent to prison. It all made sense." The connection was so strong Leslie surfed the net looking for others who were having similar dreams and stumbled across a Downey fan site called The Last Party. "I posted a message asking if anyone else out there was having weird dreams. I got several replies from people who, like me, had never really thought about him but still felt drawn to him at this time. I had just got a DV camera and I was really interested in these people's stories. Some were addicts, some were politically motivated and some just wanted to help him. How many times has Charlie Sheen been arrested and I couldn't care less, but we just felt compelled to help Downey."

What came out this project was the very sympathetic un-El-True Hollywood Story about a rich boy drug addict actor as well as a portrait of an artist whose fan following is full of intelligent and warm people. "With all his fame and money, he still has so many problems. And he was so public about it. It makes people feel less alone. He's just another person. And putting someone in prison is not going to help them. Downey symbolizes the dilemma of America's treatment of drug addicts."

While waiting for her Downey doc to find a distributor, Leslie needed to earn some cash. To make ends meet she set down the DV camera and replaced it with a 35 millimeter. In the last few years Leslie has become a force in the photography industry. "I fall into these things really easily. Sometimes I think its fate. God help me if I ever have to run a cash register or anything. I wouldn't know how! I'm shooting fashion photography in NY and LA, but I'm working on changing the fashion industry's perception of size by using plus models in edgy spreads because working with size 2, 12 year-old models is its own version of horror. Fashion is very degrading to women's self esteem so I'm trying to show the downside of the fashion industry. I want to show beauty in all sizes. I'm also interviewing some of the various models and I'm currently working on a behind the scenes look at the modeling industry."

Things seem to be coming full circle for Leslie. Once in front of the camera, she now gladly steps behind it and hopes to manipulate our brains. "All films are subjective, even if it's subtle. None of us have perfect lives and it's so safe to vent in a film. I'm recreating reality. All of my films are about the idea of acceptance. There's such a narrow scope of how we are supposed to be. We should accept people who aren't a size two, or not making \$100,000 a year. I want to change that."

But Leslie hasn't turned her back on the horror industry. "I'm also working on integrating some horror movie elements into plus-size model spreads. (I plan on getting) back into film now that DV has made the market more accessible, I've got the camera and crew, I just need a killah script! And I want to act in a horror movie. I want a body of work behind me where I can say, 'I may not be rich, but I've done some cool, fun stuff!'"

# **LESLIE DELANO SHARES WITH YOU THE TIPS AND TRICKS OF A SUCCESSFUL PHOTO SHOOT AND WORKING WITH PHOTOGRAPHERS!**

## **ABOUT DIVA LESLIE**

People always ask me what I look for in a model? The face, to me, is the most important thing. Whether the model is size 2 or 22, there are certain people whose faces the camera just loves. If you constantly get told, "WOW, you look so fabulous in pictures," you could probably be a print model. However, if people tell you you are prettier in person, you could probably do shows, etc., but not necessarily do print. There is also commercial print if you are a good type--business woman, mom, Dr--this type of work is not as glamorous but pays VERY well.

Plus size modeling is still modeling -- you are there to sell clothes -- make them look good. So you should be in good shape and toned for your size. I also look for someone who comes alive and has a lot of energy. Enthusiasm makes my job a lot easier, and your pictures better.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN WORKING WITH A PHOTOGRAPHER:**

Photographers all have different working styles, but I can tell you what I'm like to work with. I try to give models as many looks as possible, because you need that in your book, so we'll usually do a mix of location and studio. Living in LA, traffic is a big factor, timewise, so careful planning is helpful -- this means letting the photographer know ahead of time, if possible, what looks you want -- beach, urban, studio, etc. I tell people to allow the full day for 3-4 rolls, because hair and makeup changes take a lot of time, as well as travel time, wardrobe pulling, etc.

It also helps to bring magazine tears of things you would like to copy. Keep a loose leaf binder of photos you like and bring them to your shoot. That way we both know what you want. And be realistic -- if you want to do a Sports Illustrated type shot, know that I can shoot the style of the shot, but not necessarily make you look like Giselle. You'd be surprised how many prospective models don't differentiate between the photography and the model in an ad. Pick pictures for their style, not the model.

## **WHAT TO PREPARE - I HAVE A LONG LIST OF THINGS THAT I LIKE MODELS TO DO.**

- \* Body preparation -- Your face, hair and body are your calling cards, so they have to be up to spec. This means -- no roots showing, no split ends, no tan lines, no zits, no errant body hairs -- get thee to a salon and get it all removed, including facial fuzz, mustaches, the whole bit. We all know women are more than the sum of their parts but modeling is a parts business so make sure those parts are smooth, hair free, clean and shiny!

- \* Hygiene -- Come to the shoot with clean hair and no makeup.

- \* Diet -- And lay off the salt, carbs and alcohol a couple of days prior to the shoot -- plus size does not mean water retaining sea cow, which is certainly what I am if I go out for Mexican and then go on camera!

- \* Posing -- Practice in front of the mirror, or better yet with a digital camera and a timer. This is essential as you will learn your face (most people's isn't even), which expressions work, body angles that are flattering, etc.

- \* Payment -- Make sure you can pay the photographer, make-up person and stylist in cash -- we have all seen too many bounced checks, and while we know YOU would never do that, we insist on cash!

- \* Snacks -- Bring snacks, water and a straw so once your lips are done you don't mess it all up slurping from a water bottle.

- \* Clothes -- there is a reason the job "stylist" was invented. These wonderful people have the ability to pick clothes that you would never be caught dead in on the street but make your pictures look like you did a spread in Vogue. I try to insist prospective models use a stylist -- they will shop with you and pull outfits together, then be on set to make sure those outfits look flawless in the shot. Clothes are a HUGE part of the picture and most of us buy things we think make us look thinner (black), or we can't sit down in (that's what pins are for on set) which don't photograph well at all. If you truly can't afford a stylist, take an issue of Grace to the store with you and try to replicate the outfits you see in there, including the shoes.

- \* Shoes -- thin heels!! no clunky shoes -- they don't shoot well! If you can't afford Jimmy Choo than go to Target and buy knock offs that you just use for shoots (ie, no scuffed up shoes, please)

- \* Undergarments -- Nude thongs, bodysapers, bras and hose -- paisley undies are very lovely until you get handed a pair of white capris.

## **WHAT ASPIRING MODELS SHOULD LOOK FOR IN A PHOTOGRAPHER AND PHOTO CONTRACT:**

Look at their pics -- whether via website or books, also, ask around. I end up shooting for models again and again as time progresses because they know me and like my work -- that's the kind of person you want to shoot with, someone who has good word of mouth. Don't let price be a deterrent -- the ones that charge what seems a lot are often very very good and deserve it -- remember, your pictures are what get you work -- period. Ask other models and agents who they recommend.

It's also important to have good chemistry -- I think it is easier for me having been a model and being a woman -- models feel very comfortable with me -- plus I'm extremely silly and don't take myself that seriously -- this is fun, you know? If you feel a bad vibe off a photographer, get out of there. You can bring someone with you if you want, but make sure that someone is not a kid -- kids are a no no at shoots, too distracting. However, the person you bring should know that if you are shooting with me, I will most likely put them to work :-)

## **WHAT ARE PROOFS**

Proofs are either sheets or 4x6 prints or slides, depending on what the photographer used. You and your agent look at these and decide which ones you want to blow up for your book.

## **WHAT IS A TEST SHOOT**

There are two kinds of testing -- one for the model's benefit, mainly; and one for the photographer's benefit. Model tests are when the model pays a photographer to shoot pictures for her book. While the photographer may use the pics as well, for self promotion, the main goal of these tests is to get the models useable images.

Sometimes I want to try out something -- a film stock, location, make-up artist -- then I will "test" a model, which means the model does not pay me for the shoot but is not guaranteed a "useable" shot, either -- it might be too artsy or even not come out that great at all. So think of those kinds of tests as good practice.

There is a third combo in here, when you get a starter photographer. He or she will shoot model pics, including ones the model wants, for free or splitting costs of film, so he or she can practice and build their own book. I did this when I was starting out. Here you really have a range -- you could, as a model, work with the next Bruce Weber for free, or you could work with someone not so great. As long as it's a safe environment, and you've got the time to play, I recommend you get as much camera time as you can!

## **WHAT YOU CAN DO AS THE TALENT?**

Just have fun with it -- it is hard to solely support yourself as a plus size model, so if you want to pursue it, do your homework-- there are a lot of good resources on the web, plusmodels.com, this site -- learn all you can and have fun with it!

Photographer Leslie Delano brings a wealth of expertise to the industry! She knows the ins and out of the modeling biz since she is not only a talented photographer, but has spent many years in both Chicago and NY in front of the camera as a straight size model. Since 2001, Leslie has taken her talents behind the camera and shoots models for the top agencies in LA -- Brand, Wilhelmina, Otto, Click, Next and is also the signature photographer for the Kiyonna Klothing line.

This talented Diva is also a screenwriter, director and makeup artist. Her scripts include: 'Alien Space Avenger,' 'Headgames' and 'Deadly Lessons.' Her directing credits include: 'Deadly Lessons' and 'Why Robert--a documentary about actor Robert Downey's Jr's fan club.' She has worked in Special FX make-up for horror movies including: Class of Nuke'em High.

Leslie is currently working on her first novel!

Visit Leslie's Websites:

[www.mindspring.com/~modelmuse](http://www.mindspring.com/~modelmuse)

[www.mindspring.com/~delanophoto](http://www.mindspring.com/~delanophoto)